

Council on Aging Board Meeting
October 12, 2005

In Attendance:

Chairman Paul Keegan, Vice-Chairman Helene Tanenholtz, Board members Lillian Goodman, Helen McLaughlin, Tim Swiss, and Secretary John Concordia. Director Sharon Yager and Outreach Coordinator Walter Rice were also present. Board member Al Crommett was excused.

1. Chairman's Comments:

The Chairman opened the meeting at 10:05am. The minutes of the September 14, 2005 meeting were reviewed and approved by the board. The Chairman postponed further comments in order to give Walter Rice an opportunity to present his plan to expand his outreach activity to include a "stress management" training program at the 3 senior housing facilities in town as well as at the senior center. He sees a need for such a program based on his last twelve to sixteen months on the job and plans to try to carry out a six month effort involving 1 hour/week session at each facility on a rotating basis. No additional town resources will be required. He and Sharon have discussed the proposal with responsible people at the housing facilities and they seem to be in agreement. The board members expressed some concern with the potential over extension of Walter's workload, the need for more volunteers, and the subtle question of where the COA should offer more "services" directly to seniors rather than referring them to others. It would behoove us to review the progress carefully over the next few months.

Paul continued his comments by noting that he did attend the recent MCOA Conference at Sturbridge, MA. Sharon subsequently provided board members a list of staff and board members who had attended with detail on specific workshops attended. All agreed it was time well spent. Paul's final comments had to do with his attendance at a Westwood, MA meeting of the group working toward legislation on Property tax relief for seniors. The latest input suggests that the proposed legislation may be on the Senate floor soon for debate.

2. Liaison Reports:

Sharon reported that CMAA and **Shrews.Comm.Part./Children** still are without representatives.

Friends of the SCC, Inc.:--Helene reported that the Friends "Jail and Bail" during the fall festival made about \$1,650.00 and she also noted that the friends underwrote the lunch at the Senior Center. Paul noted that he had initiated an opportunity for the Friends to participate in a "craft fair" at the Astra-Zeneca in Westborough.

Elder Services of Worcester/Outreach:--Walter Rice submitted his monthly report on outreach which included his efforts there.

3. Old Business:

Lillian reported that the health care committee will be meeting on the 19th. A report will be ready for the COA board in November.

Tim reported that the **Transportation** committee had held 2 meetings, one of which included a van driver, a disabled rider, and a representative from Shrewsbury Crossings. The discussions centered on the use of the COA 3rd van. The conclusion for now is that we are maximizing its use within the many restrictions imposed by the WRTA.

Sharon provided the board members with summaries of survey data from the 1997 and the 2002 surveys (2002 not completed yet).

4. New Business:

A budget workshop was scheduled for Tuesday, October 25th at 9am.

Sharon reported that discussions are in process for more inter-departmental/agency collaboration. The COA will participate in “Hands Across The Water” with the library, the health department, and the schools. The program will collect books, videos, puzzles, etc. for shipment to overseas users. The senior center will provide a “drop-off” point.

Some discussion was held regarding the possibility of being on the mailing list for reports, etc. from other local agencies. Paul suggested that just an office folder be made available if anything.

5. Other:

Helen commented on how impressive she felt Emmett Schmarsow’s workshop was at the Conference. Emmett is Program Director of Elder Affairs. Helen explained she spoke on Board involvement and the role of COA Boards.

The meeting was closed at 11:45am.

*Respectfully,
John J. Concordia, Secretary*